

The Importance of Mental Health Services in College Campus

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Abstract

College represents a significant developmental stage, replete with numerous challenges across the social, academic and personal spheres. Most students successfully overcome these obstacles and thrive in their lives. However, in a crucial proportion, these challenges react with genetic and psychosocial adversities, increasing the probability of mental health issues

Mental health issues are prevalent among college students. There are sturdy and unvarying reports from across the globe that college students have higher rates of depression, anxiety and substance use or addiction. Certain findings have also been reported in many states in India. Late adolescence and early adulthood also have a higher likelihood of severe mental illness because of the neurodevelopmental trajectory. It is estimated that 75 per cent of those with severe mental illness would have experienced significant symptoms by the age of 25 yr. Thus, a sub-group of students are likely to experience the onset of severe mental illness during their time in college. Total of 13,089 suicides have been reported in a year in India, done by college students which clearly indicates relation between suicides and mental health issues and also brings us to understand the gravity of this situation. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) survey revealed that 12-13 per cent of students in India suffer from psychological, emotional and behavioral conditions. One of the most exciting and sometimes stressful transitions is that of entering a college. Through the research paper, the aim is to understand how much students realize about their mental health condition, feel the need for mental health services in the college campus and also about what possibly can aid in solving their mental stressors in college. The conclusions drawn were extraordinarily influential when studied on a larger perspective and solution oriented view.

Keywords: College, Mental health, Students.

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I. Introduction

The transition from school to college is, undoubtedly, the most important and dramatic change that the students face in the course of their education. College life is fraught with a number of challenges and problems that the students might not have faced earlier. The new kind of competition that is arising at colleges for scores and placements are somewhere detrimental to the mental health of large proportions of students. While universities seek to educate future great minds, their current policies and infrastructure do not unanimously prioritize mental health, thus, they often cannot meet the holistic needs of students and struggle to uphold their central mission.

Whatever that might be, from social media toxicity to their own social domains, students tend to face a million things while interacting with the society in their own way.

Consider these reasons that higher education should invest in campus mental health and student wellness:

- Better academic performance
- Supporting mental needs of students
- Prevents suicide
- Increases student retention

Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the pressures of life, realize their potential, learn and work well, and contribute to the community. It is an integral part of health and well-being that supports our individual and collective ability to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world in which we live. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is essential for personal, community and socio-economic development.

Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, experienced differently by people, with degrees of severity and stress, and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.

Mental health problems include mental health disorders and psychosocial disabilities, as well as other mental health conditions that involve significant anxiety, dysfunction or risk of self-harm. Children with mental health problems are more likely to experience lower levels of mental wellbeing, but this is not always or necessarily the case. In the context of today's fast growing world, mental health becomes a great determinant of someone's success and wellbeing in society and life.

Objectives

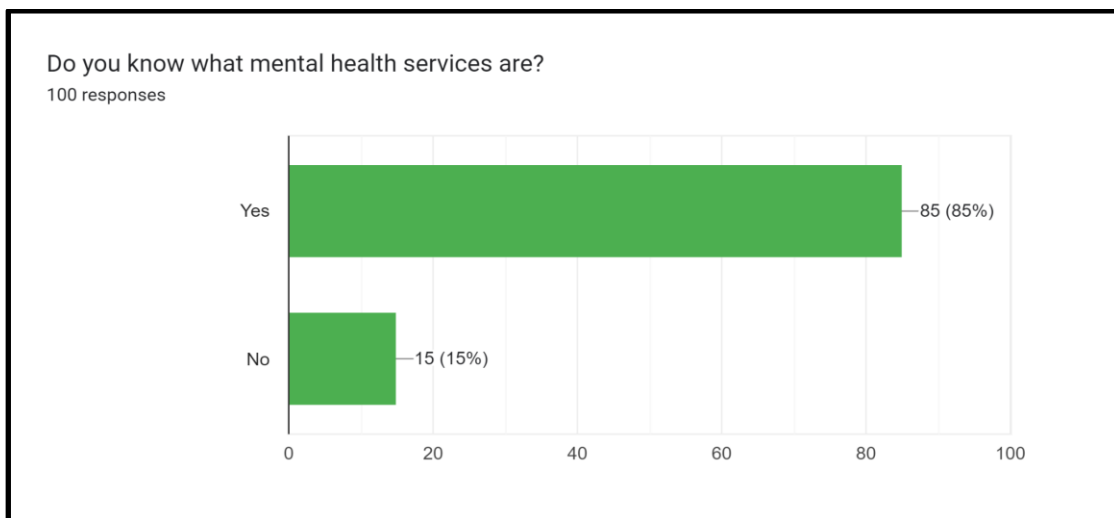
1. To analyze what students think about their own mental health
2. To study if students feel the need of mental health services in college
3. To identify what measures could possibly solve the problem of poor mental health.

II. Research Methodology:

Research Problem Formulation	There are research studies based on the importance of Mental Health, but when it comes to college students and the need of mental health services on college campuses it has been neglected. Thus after reviewing various research papers on importance of mental health it was found that not much research has been done in this field especially when the geographical area is restricted to Nashik
Research Design	The research design that is used is descriptive in nature, as descriptive research designs are used to describe the data and characteristics of population of a specific phenomenon, and also initially observe data and then describe what was observed from it.
Data Collection	Primary source: Questionnaire- In this method google form with approx. 10 questions had been prepared and shared with students to get responses. Secondary Source: Published or unpublished data, books, magazines, newspaper, trade journals
Population	Undergraduate students from Nashik

Data Analysis and Interpretation

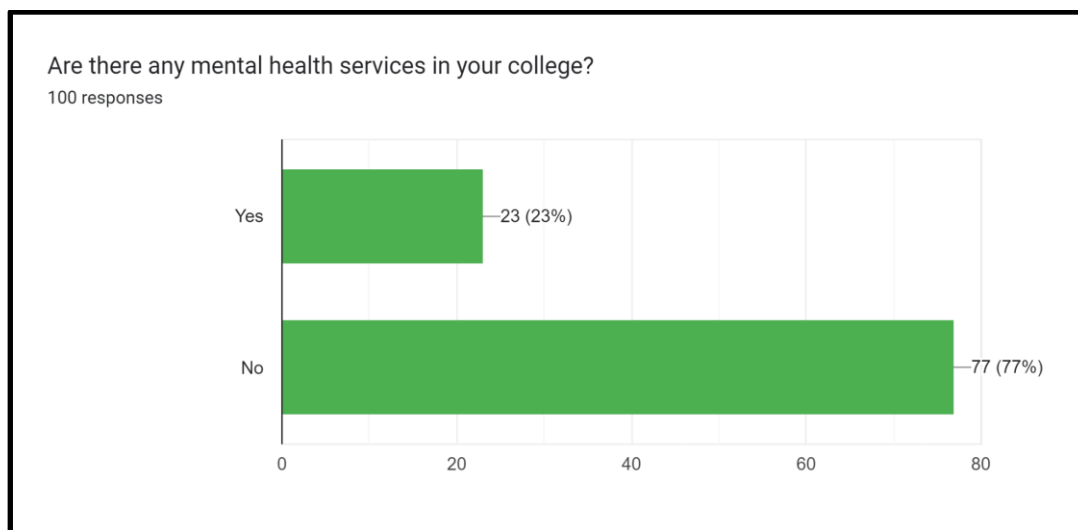
This data is collected from 100 students studying in colleges of Nashik in various fields and year of course. Each of the responses are genuine to an extent and express a student's opinion about their mental health & college.



Graph no. 1

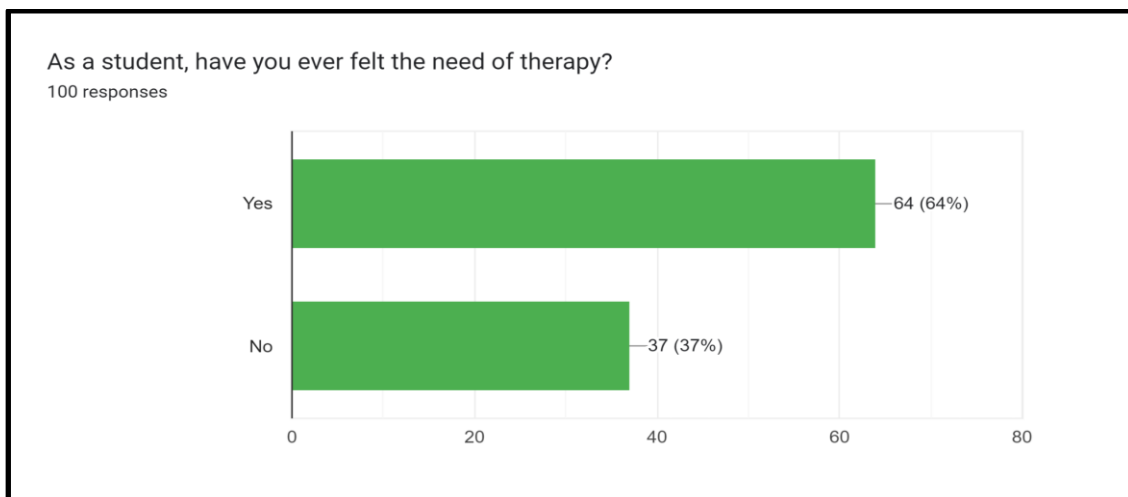
Out of 100, 85 students have responded positively for knowing what mental health services actually are. Due to a better awareness amongst college students about mental health, they seem to be greatly aware about what services are offered to people who are suffering from mental crisis.

This graph clearly declares the fact that students know the ways they can seek help in case of any mental health issue as they are well aware of the services offered in these concerns, like individual psychotherapy, group therapy, medication, recreational therapies etc.



Graph 2

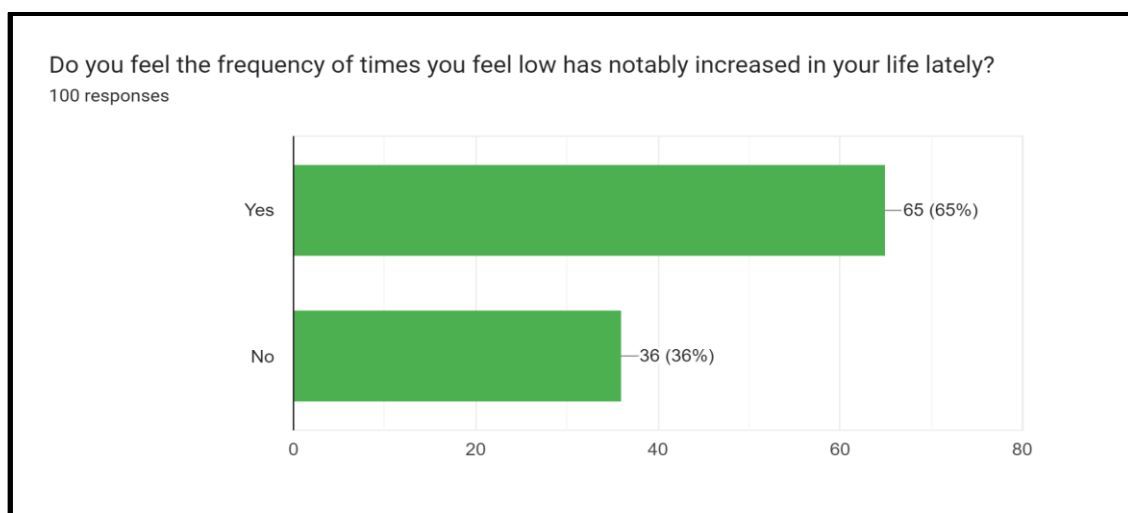
This question was asked to understand if the respondents are in any way benefiting from any mental health services that the colleges are capable of providing. But, as expected the responses have been quite disappointing as 77% of the college students accept that no mental health services are provided in college which can help the most prone generation to cope with the pressure they face from college and their personal life.



Graph 3

This graph provides very significant insight into the problems faced by students. 64% of college students have accepted that they did feel the need of therapy as a student, which directly corresponds to the responsibility of the college to manage.

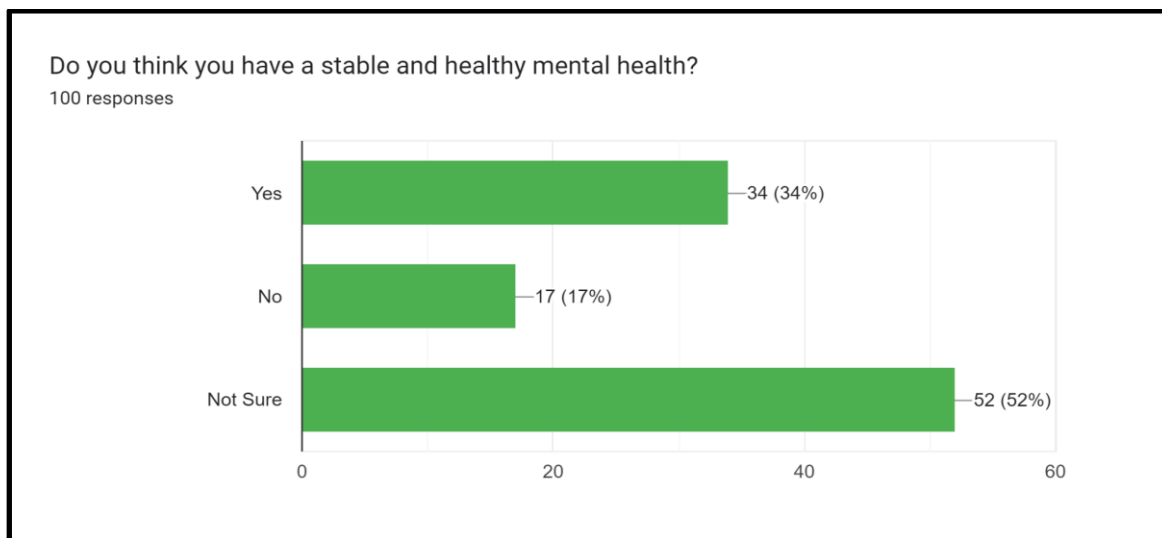
To be more logical, 64% have remembered and accepted the fact that they needed therapy, something which still is a little surreptitious topic to discuss openly. There are chances of this number to be higher.



Graph 4

This question aimed at assessing the mental health condition of students for a longer course, especially their recent months as such. The responses are again alarming as the majority of students, i.e 65% do feel that they feel low more often in their lives lately which is concomitant to poor mental health of these students.

35%, however, can be considered fine in their understanding but they too lie in the same plain as others, which means they are equally prone to face some issues in future. These numbers show the exigency for the colleges to understand the needs of students.

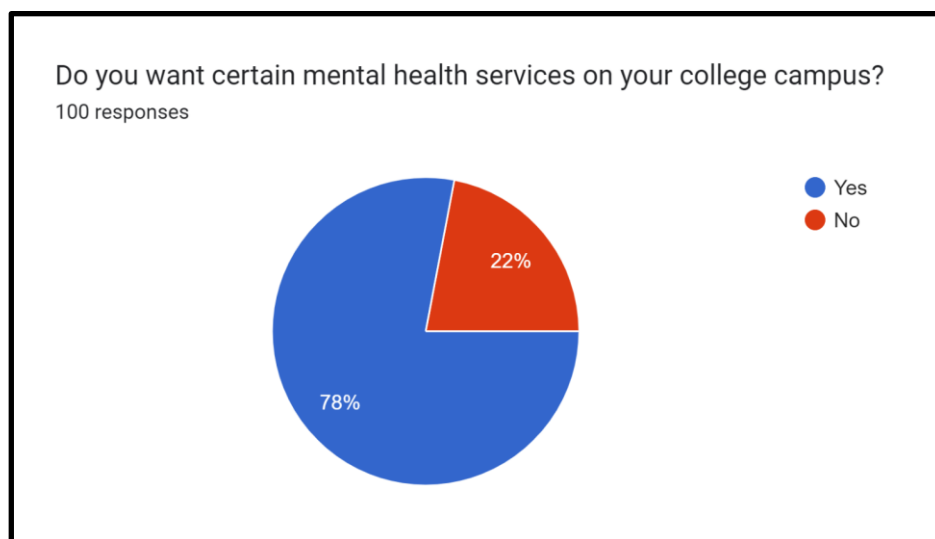


Graph 5

When asked about what they think about their mental health, 17% agreed that they have an unstable and unhealthy mental health.

A large proportion of people, which is more than half i.e. 52%, are very uncertain and unaware about their own mental health

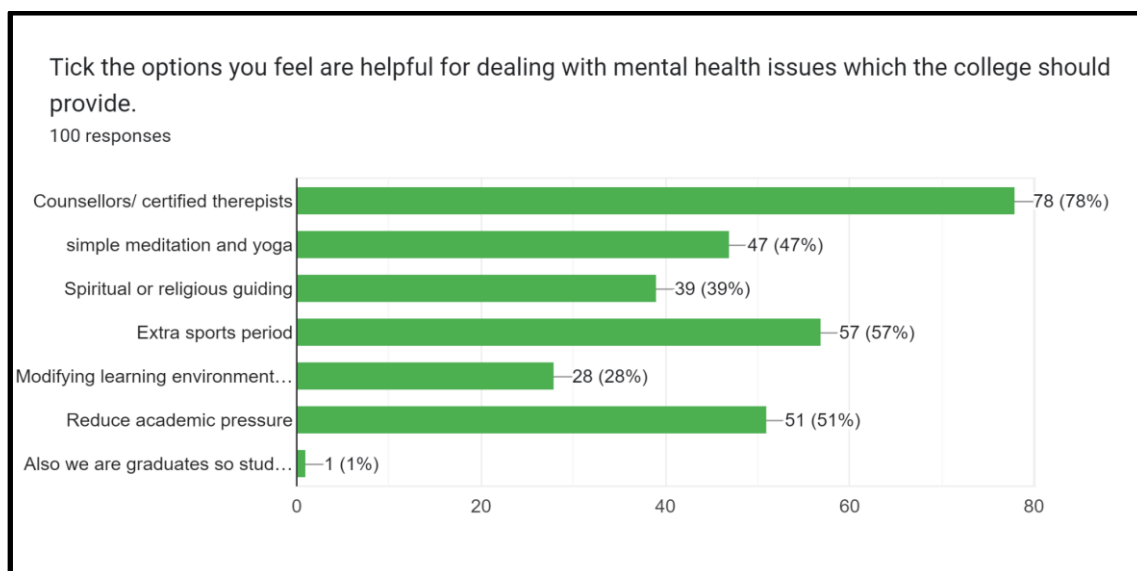
34% accepted to have fairly good mental health.



Graph 6

Here we can see that a very high majority i.e. 78% students are demanding mental health services in colleges. Whereas 22% do not feel the need for the same.

If we notice, the percentage of people who agreed having poor mental health in previous questions were in 60s, whereas the people demanding mental health services on college campuses are approximately 80%. By this we can understand the immense need for colleges to undertake actions.



Graph 7

Out of some services suggested most people preferred having professional counselor/ certified therapists to be present in college to provide assistance. Around 78% preferred them.

The second highest preference was given to sports. Games and sports are scientifically proven to improve mental and physical health which is quite important to be inculcated in the college routine. However, colleges tend to ignore this.

Reducing academic pressure, according to students, will help them feel relieved from a huge pressure and also help them focus on other important life decisions.

Other options like simple meditation and yoga, religious guiding etc also can be used.

III. Findings

1. College students have been observed to know about various mental health services that are necessary but they have very less opportunity to take benefit from one through their colleges. 85% of people had knowledge of what these mental health services are but only 23% of people agreed having some of these services in their college campus.
2. Through the research, it can be very clear that the college student population is in a very poor condition of mental health. This can be seen as 64% accept they have felt the need of therapy as students, 65% have faced more gloominess in life lately and also we see a lot of uncertainty and ambiguity when students were asked to judge their own mental health.
3. The colleges in Nashik have not fairly looked after this important segment of teaching, which is providing necessary and professional mental health support.
4. Students can be largely seen demanding mental health services. 78% of people have shown interest in having certain mental health services in college.
5. Having professional counselors/certified therapists was the most preferred option of mental health services that the college can provide as 78% of people agreed with this.
6. Games and sports were the second most preferred option, and fairly an easier option for the college also to cater to. Encouraging sports and games can considerably augment the overall physical, social and mental health of the students.
7. Reducing syllabus, meditation and yoga, religious guiding etc were the following options that students chose after the above mentioned points.

IV. Conclusion

In light of the prevailing mental health issues among college students, it is imperative to acknowledge their potential long-term negative impacts on personal, social, academic, and occupational spheres if left unaddressed. This pressing concern assumes a pivotal position in the Indian context as the number of people

enrolling for higher education is increasing. The solution is to establish evidence-based mental health services in all higher education institutions that are structured and continuously evaluated for effectiveness in long term.

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